

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Claim 1. (Currently amended) An instrument comprising: A

a stick-like object receiving member for receiving a stick-like object, comprising:

a cylindrical side portion which engages with at least a part of the outer peripheral surface of the stick-like object and surrounds at least a part of the outer peripheral surface of the stick-like object, and

a bottom portion which closes one end of said cylindrical side portion, and the stick-like object receiving member having safety precautions, wherein a slit is formed in said cylindrical side portion and bottom portion so as to penetrate said cylindrical side portion and bottom portion in the axial direction, to provide an air passage of the stick-like object receiving member; and

a barrel comprising:

a cylindrical casing having one end within which said stick-like object receiving member is detachably mounted;

an end face to which said collar portion of the stick-like object receiving member is locked;

an inner peripheral surface which engages with at least part of said cylindrical side portion of the stick-like object receiving member and surrounds the outer peripheral surface of said cylindrical side portion; and

a step portion formed on said inner peripheral surface so as to be separated from said bottom portion of the stick-like receiving member and including an opening,

wherein a gap is formed between said step portion and said bottom portion that

communicates with the slit and forms an air passage together with the slit and the opening.

Claim 2. (Original) The stick-like object receiving member according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of said slits are formed at intervals in the circumferential direction.

Claim 3. (Original) The stick-like object receiving member according to claim 1, wherein said cylindrical side portion has a collar portion protruding outward in the radial direction on the other end thereof.

Claim 4. (Original) The stick-like object receiving member according to claim 2, wherein said cylindrical side portion has a collar portion protruding outward in the radial direction on the other end thereof.

Claims 5-9. (Canceled).

Claim 10. (New) An instrument comprising:

a stick-like object receiving member comprising:

a cylindrical side portion; and

a bottom portion at one end of said cylindrical side portion, and

a barrel comprising:

a cylindrical casing in which said stick-like object receiving member is detachably mounted; and

a step portion defining a gap with said bottom portion and including an

opening,

wherein said stick-like object receiving member forms a slit in said cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion thereby defining an air passage through said slit, said gap, and said opening.

Claim 11. (New) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said cylindrical side portion is adapted to engage at least a part of an outer peripheral surface of a stick-like object.

Claim 12. (New) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said cylindrical side portion is adapted to surround at least a part of an outer peripheral surface of a stick-like object.

Claim 13. (New) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said slit penetrates both said cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion.

Claim 14. (New) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said stick-like object receiving member further forms a plurality of slits in said cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion.

Claim 15. (New) The instrument of claim 14, wherein said plurality of slits are spaced circumferentially around said stick-like object receiving member.

Claim 16. (New) The instrument of claim 10, wherein said cylindrical side portion comprises a collar portion protruding radially outward at another end of said cylindrical side

portion.

Claim 17. (New) The instrument of claim 16, wherein said cylindrical casing comprises an end face engaging said collar portion.

Claim 18. (New) A writing instrument comprising:

an eraser receiver comprising:

a cylindrical side portion; and

a bottom portion at one end of said cylindrical side portion, and

a barrel comprising:

a cylindrical casing in which said eraser receiver is detachably mounted; and

a step portion defining a gap with said bottom portion and including an

opening,

wherein said eraser receiver forms a slit in said cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion thereby defining an air passage through said slit, said gap, and said opening.

Claim 19. (New) The instrument of claim 18, wherein said cylindrical side portion is adapted to engage at least a part of an outer peripheral surface of an eraser.

Claim 20. (New) The instrument of claim 18, wherein said cylindrical side portion is adapted to surround at least a part of an outer peripheral surface of an eraser.

Claim 21. (New) The instrument of claim 18, wherein said slit penetrates both said

cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion.

Claim 22. (New) The instrument of claim 18, wherein said eraser receiver further forms a plurality of slits in said cylindrical side portion and said bottom portion.

Claim 23. (New) The instrument of claim 22, wherein said plurality of slits are spaced circumferentially around said eraser receiver.

Claim 24. (New) The instrument of claim 18, wherein said cylindrical side portion comprises a collar portion protruding radially outward at another end of said cylindrical side portion.

Claim 25. (New) The instrument of claim 24, wherein said cylindrical casing comprises an end face engaging said collar portion.